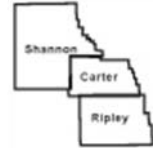




Missouri Department of Conservation

Projects, Issues and Programs in Shannon, Carter and Ripley Counties



Current Conversations

Special Points of Interest

MDC Working to Improve Water Quality in the Ozarks

Promoting Wildlife Populations and Healthy Trees Through Fuel wood Removal

Preparing for Archery Season

Big Impact on Wild- life by Doing the Little Things

2009 Peck Ranch Managed Deer Hunts

Glade Conservation

Inside This Issue:

Forestry	2
Protection	3
Private Lands	4
Wildlife	5
O & E	6
Twin Pines	7
Contact MDC	8

MDC Working to Improve Water Quality in the Ozarks

Dave Woods

Fisheries Management Biologist

Being a part of the Ozark National Scenic Riverways, it is hard to believe that a large section of the Jacks Fork River has been listed on the Missouri Department of Natural Resources' (MDNR) 303(d) list of impaired waters for the better part of the last decade. While the DNR recently removed the Jacks Fork from this list, water quality continues to be an issue. High levels of bacterial contamination, namely *E. coli*, have persistently been a problem in the aquatic systems of the area. The high concentrations of *E. coli* in the river have been attributed to the large number of horses present along the Jacks Fork during organized trail rides in the spring, summer, and fall months. As horses defecate on the trails, runoff after a rain event transports the fecal bacteria into the ditches, hollows, and streams that feed into the Jacks Fork River.

One of the favorite riding spots for equestrians during these trail rides is compartment 35 of Angeline Conservation Area (CA) which is a Missouri Department of Conservation (MDC) area adjacent to the Jacks Fork River. Because of the high amount of equestrian use on Angeline CA, in 2005 MDC staff began construction of approximately 9.5 miles of horse trails on the area to accommodate the large volume of horse traffic and redirect horse traffic to areas where it would have less ecological impact. While constructing the trails, MDC staff implemented best management practices (BMPs) to reduce the *E. coli* contribution to the Jacks Fork River from runoff from the conservation area after trail rides.

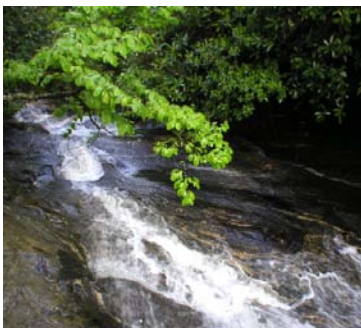
Water quality did improve after the trails were completed, however there were still water quality problems occurring in Lick Log Hollow, the largest permanent stream in this area and a tributary to the Jacks Fork. Because the stream is permanent, equestrians frequently watered their horses in it during trail rides, which contributed significant amounts of *E. coli* into Lick Log Hollow. In light of this, MDC looked to implement additional BMPs to supplement the trail improvements to protect the water quality of Lick Log.

MDC fisheries staff conducted water quality sampling in 2007 and 2008 to further investigate the degree which organized trail rides were causing water quality degradation in Lick Log Hollow. Samples were taken from July through October in 2007 and April through October in 2008. From these samples, MDC staff found that, during trail ride days, the *E. coli* levels in Lick Log Hollow were significantly higher than non-trail ride days. In fact, *E. coli* levels were more than four times higher in Lick Log during trail rides. In addition, visual evidence could be seen of numerous horses accessing the creek after an organized ride. For this reason, MDC decided to come up with a way to protect the water quality of Lick Log Hollow and the Jacks Fork River by discouraging equestrians

Continued on Page 2

from accessing the stream, while also providing an adequate source of drinking water for horses during organized trail rides.

In late 2008, MDC staff secured a grant through the Missouri Conservation Heritage Foundation to purchase and install a solar watering station on Angeline CA. This alternative watering system will use solar energy to pump water from Lick Log Hollow to a watering station well outside of the stream corridor. This system will allow riders to water their horses on the trail rather than having to access the creek. Keeping horses out of the stream corridor, and thereby reducing manure input into the stream, should help improve the water quality of Lick Log creek. Construction of the watering station should be completed by the 2010 riding season. MDC staff will again take water quality samples during the spring, summer, and fall of 2010 to determine if the alternative watering system is effectively improving the water quality of Lick Log Hollow. With the cooperation of equestrians during organized trail rides, our clear, cool waters of the Ozarks will be protected for future generations of users to enjoy.



Forestry

Promoting Wildlife Populations and Healthy Trees Through Fuel Wood Removal

Lloyd Rome

Resource Assistant

Most Missourians enjoy wildlife, trees, and the great outdoors. As fall quickly approaches, the cool autumn breeze reminds us that old man winter will soon arrive and that it is time to get ready for all of the fall activities that we enjoy. A time honored tradition for many in the Ozarks is to gather fire wood for the cold winter nights to come.

As you head out to your favorite area to cut fire wood, keep in mind that trees are habitat for wildlife. Different tree species and sizes attract different varieties of wildlife. Animal populations and healthy forests can be promoted and managed simultaneously by careful tree thinning and removal.

A mistake made by many fuel wood cutters is to think that a hollow tree is only good for fire wood. Yes, these trees usually produce good fuel wood and are easy to split. No, they are probably not very good for lumber production. However, hollow trees provide dens for squirrels, raccoons, and other wildlife. They can also have the ability to produce mast, food which can be

eaten by many animals and birds. Many of these “cull” trees are usually much larger in size and are nice to look at while adding character to the landscape. So, are these trees really bad? NO! The same holds true for tree species that are of lower value or poor quality. A few of these trees should be retained for species diversity, wildlife use, and aesthetics in the wood lot.

While managing trees and promoting wildlife by means of thinning through fuel wood removal, the following tips and concepts will come in handy:

*Think safety first.....*Wear the proper protective clothing and gear.

*Leave the best trees.....*These are not always the prettiest. Leave some for wildlife and some for future timber harvest, while removing selected ones for fire wood.

*Remove the dead trees.....*Dead trees usually make excellent heating wood. These can also be dangerous to cut down. Watch out for broken tops and limbs while falling. A few dead trees should be left standing in the wood lot. Hawks enjoy perching on the limbs while scanning

Continued on Page 3

the forest floor for rodents.

*Build brush piles.....*The limbs and tops of trees piled together create habitat for rabbits, quail and

other small game. These piles also provide nesting areas for turkeys.

For more information on forest and wildlife management contact your

Local Missouri Department of Conservation forester, wildlife biologist, or private land conservationist.

PROTECTION

Preparing for Archery Season

Jason Langston

Conservation Agent

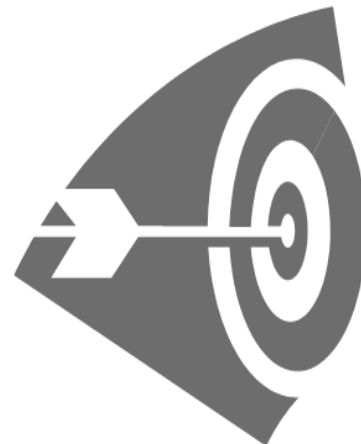
The weather is cooling off and the leaves on the trees are beginning to change colors. This is the time of the year that inspires putting up fishing poles and getting out archery equipment.

Late summer and early fall is a great time to prepare for fall archery season. First, get your bow out and make sure that it is in good working condition. Check the strings to make sure that there are no worn spots and that the cams and limbs are in good working condition. Replace strings with any defects or wear. Take your equipment into an authorized dealer if you don't feel confident in being able to fix your bow. Second, check your archery stands. If you hunt out of a climbing tree stand or a lock on tree stand, make sure that all the bolts are tight and in good condition. Also check cables or locking mechanisms on the stand to make sure they are not worn. Any worn parts need to be replaced before you use the stand. Also check the condition of your safety harness before you go to the woods. Finally, after all

equipment is in good working condition, get your bow target out and start practicing. Practice is a key component to producing a successful bow hunt. It is very important that you have good accuracy and feel confident in your abilities before entering the woods for your first hunt

Prior to your hunt, head to the woods and scout for that perfect tree to climb. Early in the season, it can be very difficult to find defined trails especially in the woods. This can complicate your prehunt work. Good places to start looking in the woods are ridge tops and bottle necks that you can find that will naturally funnel deer. A good place to look for deer signs are food plots or open fields at your hunting location. Since acorns have not yet begun to fall, deer are traveling to open fields and food plots to find food. When the acorns start falling in the woods later in the hunting season, you are probably going to have to move your stand into the woods, since acorns are a deer's favorite food.

The Missouri Archery Hunting season is broken up into two seasons. The first season runs from September 15th to November 13th, the beginning of the Fall Firearms Hunting season. The second part of the season starts on November 25th and ends on January 15th 2010. During the Fall Archery Hunting season you are allowed two Any Deer Permits. Depending on the county in which you reside you may be eligible for additional antlerless permits. You will need to check your county's regulations or contact your local Conservation Agent.



PRIVATE LANDS

Big Impact on Wildlife by Doing the Little Things

Don Foerster

Private Land Conservationist

Sometimes it's the little things you do in life that count the most. That can be the case with good fish and wildlife habitat also. Everything you do, or don't do, on your land has an effect on the wildlife that shares your property. Just letting plants grow taller, rather than clipping close to the ground, gives more cover for wildlife. Letting a few weedy plants grow results in more insects for young birds. If you think about leaving food or cover for wildlife and fish as you manage your land, you're on your way to doing the little things that can add up to having a major impact. Below are some other suggestions.

Pastures and Hay Fields: Leave roadsides and other odd areas undisturbed or wait until after the bird nesting season to mow. Add flush bars to mowing equipment. Mow hayfields from the center to the outside, giving wildlife a chance to escape to field edges. You might even think about mowing pastures every other year and save fuel while creating cover and food for wildlife. Cut your winter fire wood from trees next to the field edge and do not pile the tops. This will create edge habitat and keep the forest from shading your hay field or pasture.

Smart Pest Control: Use inte-

grated pest management practices to minimize fish and wildlife exposure to pesticides. Encourage beneficial insects, bats, raptors and other species to help in reducing crop pests. Use mechanical means to control unwanted pests and weeds when possible.

Maximize Odd Areas: Make full use of non-farmed areas by establishing habitat used by the wildlife you want to see on your farm. Use native grasses as well as forbs and legumes. Lightly disc a portion of your grasses early in the year-- new growth of annual forbs will encourage insects and produce seeds for ground nesting birds like quail and other wildlife.

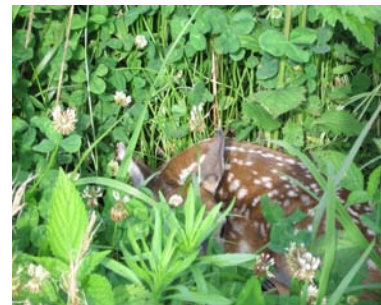
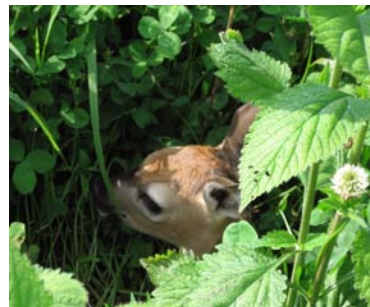
Woodlots: Plant native trees and shrubs that produce fruits and nuts. Leave dead trees standing in woodlots to provide nesting and foraging sites for woodpeckers and other cavity nesting wildlife. Put up bird houses, bat boxes, and other artificial nesting structures.

Streams and Ponds: Limit the access to water sources by livestock. Create or leave a forested riparian area along streams. Leave stream banks unmowed or mow every other year. Create a grass buffer around ponds. Place your used cedar or pine Christmas tree in your pond to provide fish cover. All of these practices will increase water quality by reducing

artificial nutrients and decrease water temperature

Yards: Use native plants when landscaping your yard. Native plants add beauty while attracting many different species of wildlife from bees and butterflies to bunnies and birds.

Choosing to do some or all of these wildlife-friendly practices will increase food and shelter which, in turn, increases the number and diversity of wildlife using your property. As I watch the doe and her two fawns drink from the clear cool creek on my property I realized that doing the little things really does pay dividends



WILDLIFE

2009 Peck Ranch Managed Deer Hunts

Ryan Houf

Wildlife Biologist

For those of us who eat, breathe, and sleep deer hunting, this fall brings a new season of hopes and dreams of taking the deer of a lifetime. Along with the change of seasons from summer to fall comes a change of seasons in deer management at Peck Ranch Conservation Area. These changes in deer management are made with the hopes that they will help fulfill someone's dream of the hunt of a lifetime whether it be their first deer, a healthy succulent doe for the frying pan, or that mature ten point buck you always wanted to have hanging on your wall.

Peck Ranch will be offering three different managed hunts this year. The youth only hunt will be held on October 3rd and 4th. Sixty hunters will be drawn and will be given one any deer permit. Youth hunters will be allowed to shoot any deer regardless of number of antler points. The archery hunt will be held on November 6th, 7th, and 8th. Two hundred hunters will be drawn and given one any deer permit. A four-point restriction will be a requirement in order to harvest an antlered deer. Peck Ranch's final managed hunt will be a muzzleloader hunt held on December 12th and 13th. Two hundred hunters will be drawn and will be given one any deer permit. Like the archery hunt, a four-point restriction will be a requirement in order to shoot an antlered deer. You might be asking yourself why we changed the managed deer hunt format. My answer would simply be ...quality. We want to provide the best deer hunting we can by utilizing

the best deer management techniques we have to promote a healthy deer population. By moving the dates of our hunt to one hunt per month we allow less human disturbance between hunts and give deer time to resume their normal behavior. This will also allow our MDC staff more time in the critical fall months to achieve our land management goals to provide the habitat necessary to promote healthy wildlife populations.

One of the biggest changes is the number of hunters drawn for each hunt. Our biggest complaint each year is that there are too many hunters. In 2008 we had a hunter quota of 400, which equaled one hunter per 28 acres. This year, by drawing only 200 hunters, we will increase that to one hunter per 58 acres. Reducing the amount of people in the refuge will produce a better quality hunt for the hunter and will help us meet our deer management objectives.

For the next few years, we will be running a trial four-point restriction regulation. In 2008, 84% of the antlered deer harvested were less than 2.5 years old. The four-point restriction will hopefully shift the harvest to more mature deer. We will be monitoring the regulation change by taking sex, age, weight, and antler measurement data at the check in station to see if there is any

change over time. Hopefully, this change will control our deer population by creating an emphasis on doe harvest and will balance our sex ratio to create a healthier deer herd. Creating a healthier deer population and changing hunting dates and hunter numbers will insure that we provide a quality deer hunting experience for the public on Peck Ranch Conservation Area.

Here are a few things to remember. If you missed signing up for any of Peck Ranch's Managed Deer Hunts this year, remember to apply online at www.mdc.mo.gov next July 1st thru August 15th. Remember you can only apply for one managed hunt. For those who were drawn this year, the gates will open one hour prior to shooting time and everyone must pre-register at the Peck Ranch Headquarters before going to hunt. Just a reminder, the refuge will be closed to the remainder of the public during managed hunts and during statewide deer seasons. If you have any questions feel free to call Peck Ranch Office at (573) 323-4249. Good luck and come join us on one of our quality managed deer hunts.

Data collected from the 2008 Peck Ranch Managed Deer Hunt Check station is on the following page.

Date	Limit	Hunter Quota	# Applied	Chance	Actual Hunters	Buck	Doe	Button Buck	Total	Success- es %
Oct 17-19 Archery	1 Any Deer	400	389	100%	275	17	2	11	30	11%
Nov 7-9 Muzzle Loader	1 Ant- lered Deer	400	1,079	37%	353	53	-	-	53	15%
Oct. 4-5 Youth	1 Any Deer	60	122	49%	53	9	3	1	13	25%

Data collected from 2008 Peck Ranch Managed Deer Hunt Check station

OUTREACH & EDUCATION

Glade Conservation

Stephanie Rust

Conservation Education Consultant

One of the most rewarding parts of working in a conservation career is being able to meet other Missourians who share the same passion for our natural resources and work to improve the varied habitats found in our wonderful state. While many of these Missourians are employed in this career, there are many yet, who have other careers and yet spend their free time engaging in managing and restoring Missouri's beautiful landscape. These habitat heroes come from all walks of life, and I have been blessed enough to meet a few. Many of these Missouri landowners spend

countless hours restoring habitat on their lands, often times without any recognition. Their reward is knowing that they have managed the land in their possession to the betterment of life quality to the species that inhabit their lands. A few of the heroes I have met recently have been doing just that, on Missouri's mini-desert, the glade.

Of the habitats that generally need human heroics are the ever decreasing Missouri glades. Glades are natural island-like communities that are usually surrounded by wooded areas. Located predomi-

nately in the Ozark region, glades are determined by the type of bedrock found below them. There are five predominant types of glades: limestone, dolomite, sandstone, chert or igneous. Of the five types, igneous and dolomite glades are the most common in Missouri and are found predominantly in the southern half of the state and in a few locations north of the Missouri River. The bedrock below a glade determines what type of native vegetation is likely to be found there. Most glades share many commonalities. The majority of

Continued on Page 7

these glade communities are rocky clearings or “balds” that occur naturally in timbered areas. Usually found on steep, south- and west-facing slopes of hills, these glades have shallow, southern exposure that makes for near desert-like dry and rocky conditions. These unique communities are home to many species of grasses, plants and critters that are found in sunny, drought tolerant conditions and are found in no other habitat. Trees are rarely present, or found in small numbers, in healthy glades. Due to extremely sunny conditions, this absence of trees and large vegetation allow sun loving plants and native grasses to bask in the sun.

So why do these little habitat gems need human habitat heroics? Unfortunately, most glades in Missouri have undergone years of fire suppression, overgrazing by livestock or general neglect. Eastern red cedar and many types of oak trees have a tendency to overrun a glade if human intervention is not present. These tree invaders, if allowed to grow, form a dense canopy that crowds out and suppresses glade plant and animal communities, eventually leading to the transformation of a healthy glade into an overgrown glade, and lastly, no glade conditions at all.

The Missouri Department of Conservation, and many private landowners are working to restore these declining glades in many parts of Missouri, with a lot of elbow grease, chainsaws and persistence. By do-

ing so, these Missourians are helping to restore the delicate balance of biodiversity that a healthy glade offers. Spotting a collared lizard cautiously scampering to a near rock, eyeing a beautiful primrose in full bloom or catching a glance at the intriguing roadrunner can prove that the work is well worth the effort. Many Missouri landowners have already found this to be true.

Although many times, restoring a glade is a thankless job, there are hundreds of voiceless inhabitants that rely on these habitat heroics to maintain their viability. For those Missourians who have braved a glade restoration, I add a human voice of appreciation! Habitat heroics is not always an easy undertaking, but it is certainly rewarding to the voiceless glade inhabitants that benefit!

If you are interested in glade restoration or would like to learn more on the subject, the Conservation Department conducts prescribed-burning workshops that can teach you the methods, safety measures and knowledge you will need to conduct a prescribed burn on your glade. Contact your regional office for more information about prescribed burn workshops or visit our website at www.mdc.mo.gov.



Twin Pines Schedule

Sept. 6—*The Sunday Show*

Sept 12—*Nature Nuts*

Sept. 17—*Little Stinker's Storytime*

Sept 19 —*Hunter Ed*

Sept. 26—*NWTF JAKES Day*

Oct. 4 *The Sunday Show*

Oct 2—*Night Hike*

Oct. 9—*Owl-O-Ween with the Dickerson Park Zoo*

Oct. 15—*Little Stinker's Storytime*

Oct. 16—*FFA Field Day*

Oct 17—*Hunter Ed*

Oct. 18—*Natural Dyes*

Nov. 7—*Hunter Ed*

MISSOURI DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION

Ozark Regional Office

PO Box 138

551 Joe Jones Blvd.

West Plains, MO 65775

Phone: 417/256-7161

Fax: 417/256-0429

CENTRAL OFFICE

P.O. Box 180

2901 W. Truman Blvd

Jefferson City, MO 65109

Phone: 573/751-4115

We're on the Web!

www.missouriconservation.org

MDC Mission

- To protect and manage the fish, forest, and wildlife resources of the state.
- To serve the public and facilitate their participation in resource management activities.
- To provide opportunity for all citizens to use, enjoy, and learn about fish, forest, and wildlife resources.

Mission of this Newsletter

The mission of this newsletter is to share current information about conservation projects, issues, and program and to develop working relationships with the citizens of Shannon, Carter and Ripley Counties.

Share Your Thoughts

If there are any subjects you would like to see in the *Conservation Currents* please contact any employee listed below, or if you have any questions pertaining to the Wildlife Code please contact the Conservation Agent assigned to your county. County assignments and phone numbers are listed below.

Operation Game Thief and Operation Forest Arson

Sponsored by the Conservation Federation of Missouri, the Missouri Department of Conservation and the U.S. Forest Service.

CONTACT OFFICES AND NAMES

If you have a question about any of the following topics, here are your contact professionals

Shannon Co. Field Office

Eminence 573/226-3616

Forestry

Gary Gognat 573/226-3616

Terry Thompson 573/226-3616

Mike Bill 573/226-3616

Private Land Management

Mike Gaskins 573/226-3241

Conservation Agents

Brad Hadley 573/292-8540

Wildlife

Dan Drees 573/226-3616

Ryan Houf 573/323-4249

Rhonda Rimer 417/256-7161

Fisheries

Dave Woods 417/256-7161

Conservation Education

Stephanie Rust 417/256-7161

Outdoor Skills

Larry Lindeman 417/256-7161

Carter Co. Field Office

Van Buren 573/323-8515

Forestry

Mike Norris 573/323-8515

Private Land Management

Don Foerster 573/996-3619

Conservation Agents

Mark Wilcoxon 573/323-8523

Wildlife

Dan Drees 573/226-3616

Ryan Houf 573/323-4249

Rhonda Rimer 417/256-7161

Fisheries

Dave Woods 417/256-7161

Conservation Education

Pat Holloway 573/840-9788

Outdoor Skills

Larry Lindeman 417/256-7161

Ripley Co. Field Office

Doniphan 573/996-2557

Forestry

Steve Paes 573/996-2557

Private Land Management

Don Foerster 573/996-3619

Conservation Agents

Darren Killian 573/996-5984

Jason Langston 573/996-2346

Wildlife

Dan Drees 573/226-3616

Ryan Houf 573/323-4249

Rhonda Rimer 417/256-7161

Fisheries

Dave Woods 417/256-7161

Conservation Education

Pat Holloway 573/840-9788

Outdoor Skills

Larry Lindeman 417/256-7161